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Project I.D. No. 188

NAME: SASAKI, KOHANA DATE OF BIRTH: 1898 PLACE OF BIRTH: MIYAGI
Age: 80 Sex: F Marital Status: M Education: NORMAL SCHOOL

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 1928 Age: 30 M.S. ___ Port of entry: SAN FRANCISCO
Occupation/s: 1. MINISTER'S WIFE 2. _____ 3. _____
Place of residence: 1. VACAVILLE 2. FLORIN 3. _____
Religious affiliation: CHRISTIAN
Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center: MARYSVILLE
Name of relocation center: TULE LAKE, JEROME
Dispensation of property: SOLD ALL Names of bank/s: _____
Jobs held in camp: 1. MINISTER'S WIFE 2. NURSE AID
Jobs held outside of camp: _____
Left camp to go to: SEABROOK, N-J

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: 1959
Address/es: 1. ORANGE CO 2. _____
3. _____
Religious affiliation: _____
Activities: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: _____

Name of interviewer: H. TAKAHASHI Date: 2/24/78 Place: Orange
Translator: Takako Yoshida

Q: Many Sansei and Yonsei do not know about the various experiences of the Iseei in America - about their hardships, joys, and so forth. Even if the younger generations want to find out about their own background, there are no materials available presently. We are, therefore, collecting the memoirs of the Issei generation for the Sansei and the Yosei to study and learn about their own culture. So, please speak freely.

A: If that is the case, it would be far better for you to talk with the real farmers for they are the ones who have the vast experien es of life. I have experienced very little and you will probably not benefit from talk- with me.

Q: Yes, we have interviewed farmers and will continue to do so. Please state your name.

A: Kohana Sasaki

Q: Where were you born?

A: Miyagi prefecture, in the town of Sendai.

Q: What was your maiden name?

A: Kashima.

Q: When were you born?

A: On January 1st in the 31st year of Meiji.

Q: What would that be in the Western calender?

A: In 1898.

Q: So you turned 80 this year?

A: That's correct. I am 80 years old.

Q: What type of family were you born into?

A: I did not come from a very good family. My father was an ordinary govarnment offical. I was raised predominatly raised in Sendai.

Q: Was your father a prefectural official?

A: Yes.

Q: What kind of work was he involved in?

A: Predominately in the police department.

Q: Was he a police officer?

A: Yes, he was at one time.

Q: Was your father a strict disciplinarian?

A: Yes, he was very strict. Foreexample, when we went to our father to receive money for school tuition, we had to kneel politely at his feet and bow reverently to him and say, "I receive this (honorable) money". The strongest impression I still have of him is the time he gave me his first advice upon my graduation from Ochanomizu school and I was just about to enter my teaching profession. He said to me, "one, never forget on (obligation). You may forget the on which is given to you, but never forget the on which you accept. Two, now that you are to become a teacher, never mistake your teaching position - separate your personal life from your professional duty". He gave me these two advices.

Q: Please elaborate on the second advice.

A: The second advice meant that I should not neglect my teaching - I taught high school students - to attend to my personal life. I should not, he said, take leave from my teaching just to attend to a personal matter. I must discriminate in my mind my work which is a public matter and my personal life. My father taught me these two important matters. During my school years when I returned home from Tokyo, my father father insisted I pay my respects to my kindergarten teacher even before I changed my clothes or would send me to attend to some other business. I had to pay my respects, then, to my grammar school teachers, then to the Jogakko teachers. In those days, graduates of the Jogakko were allowed to attend a prefectural post-Jogakko to train to become grammar school teachers. I had to pay my

respects to my teachers there as well. Finally at the end, I was allowed to return home and change my clothes. My father was a stern man.

Here's another example of my father's sternness: his grandchildren came to visit him during the summer vation. They would want to go swimming and would ask him for a ride to go swimming. These young children did not like to wak, but my father would say to them, "why do you think you have feet?" So these small children were made to wak to the beach . They would later say, "I don't want to go to Grandpa's place." He was a stern disciplinarian who was not satisfied until everything was in order.

Q: Do you remember being scolded when you were young?

A: I was scolded only once that I remember. I was babysitting my younger sister and she stuck her fingers into a stove. She burned herself and I was scolded for that incident. That was the only time. I don't remember ever being scolded since.

Q: What was your mother like?

A: My mother passed away when I was 10 years old.

Q: Do you remember your mother?

A: No, I really do not remember my mother. However, I doremember one time I went out to get medicine for her while she was ill. Also, I remember being anxious evary time I came home because I was afraid I would see a scroll written "Kichū" which means "death has occurred in this house". I would worry whether I would see this scroll on our fron door or not. My mother was ill for some time so I do not remember her too well. However, she was a gentle lady with a veautiful voice. Her voice was vaery beautiful.

Q: How many siblings do you have?

A: I have 3 elder brothers, 2 elder sisters, and one younger brother and one younger sister. I have 7 brothers and sisters.

Q: There were 8 children in your family?

A: That's correcdt. We had a large family - many people did in those days

Q: Were you one of the yonnger children?

A: Yes, I was the 3rd youngest.

Q: What do you remember about your childhood?

A: About my childhood? What would you like to know about my childhood?

Q: Would you tell us about the time you were in kinderfarten?

A: Oh, I see. We had a white bear rug in our zashiki (living room) when I was little. When my father went out, my elder brother would weat the bear skin rug and put a lit match in his mouth. He would put the match in his mouth because this would make his mouth look large. He would frighten me like that. He would do that every time our father and mother went out. He'd always put the white bear skin rug and scare us.

Q: Did you have good borthers?

A: Yes, they all were. My sisters were very nice also. We all got along well together.

Q: Did all your brothers and sisters go to school?

A: Yes, we all completed our education. My brothers entered the engineering field. All three of my brothers were involved in engineering work.

Q: Did theygo to college?

Q: Well, yes, but this was in the old days so they did not go to an university per se, but received degrees from technological schools - they were called upper technical schools. That was the level of their education.

Q: You graduated from Ochanomizu, so did that make you one of the more educated ones in your family? Well . . . how many years did you go to grammar school?

A: I went for 8 years. In my generat on, the educational system was a little different: jinjo (compulsory education) was 4 years, koto shogakko (upper grammer school) for 4 years, and koto san-nen (higher upper grammar school) for one year for thos wanting to continue their education to enter normal schools.

Q: That's 9 years all together.

A: I then went on to Jogakko (girl's high school). I went in as a 3rd year student, 3 years of schools was concentrated into 2 years. Therefore, I went to Jogakko for 2 years. Then I entered the higher normal school (Ni-bu).

Q: What is Ni-bu?

A: Ni-bu course of study was for those who had graduated from Jogakko and were planning to teach in the grammar schools. Also, each prefecture had a prefectural normal school and one could enter these schools upon graduation from ;compulsory grammar school - that is, to have completed 4 years of school and then receive teaching training. There were two types of normal schools in my time.

Q: You did go to Ochanomizu, right?

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: When did you go to Ochanomizu? Was it later on?

A: Yes. Attendance to Noormal School required 2 years of obligatory service. I worked at a model school called Nona Kita Jinjo Koto Shogakko (Nana Kita Common Higher Grammar School) located about 2 Li north of Sendai. The school still exists to this day. I worked there for two years.

Q: What was your major at the Ochanomizu school?

A: I was an Home Economist.

Q: Is that what you graduated as?

A: Yes.

Q: What was the above grammar school you just mentioned?

A: A higher school.

Q: What do you remember about your life at that time and around your grammar school years?

A: Let's see. I remember Yonekura Sensi who was an excellent music and he took a special liking to me. Then there was Ishihara Sensi who had a donut-shaped haircut, very close to his head. He played the organ and taught us the song, "Nara no Miyako". The The Sense's name was Kishi Ishihara. There is a phrase in the sone, what was that . . . oh, yes, a phrase that goes, "kishi no sakura" or something similar to that. Our teacher's name was in the song so if we didn't sing it properly he would make us sing it over and over. I asked him why we had to make such a special effort to sing that song. He scolded me for that. I remember that.

In grammar school we always had to go to school - no matter what the weather was like, raining, windy, in any kind of weather. When it rained hard, my elder brother carreid me on his back to school. I could never be absent from school eventh if I had a heachache. My father always made me go to school. If we didn't go, he would scold us. I went to school without an absence or tardiness for 8 years. I received an award from the prefecture for this. The award was a calligraphy box with a design of Sendai hagi with a moon peeping through it.

Q: A Sendai hagi?

A: A Sendai hagi is different from an ordinary hagi (bush clover). There is fur around the edges of the leaves. That's a Sendai hagi.

Q: What did you do for fun while you were in grammer school or in junior

high school?

A: Well . . . there wasn't anything especially fun . . . in grammar school? Well . . .

Q: What did you do for play?

A: We're talking about the oldsdays so there really weren't anything we did for fun. We played oterama, mari, oni-gokko. I would have a tangerine box decorated and play house with it. I'd get 10 match boxes and make drawers from it. I got my elder brother to write, "calligraphy notbook" on the box and I would put them in my doll box. The old tangerine boxes in my days were about this tall and this wide. Small. I put my belongings that I just mentioned and my dolls in it. That's about the extent of what I did for fun. We didn't have any special things to play with in the old days.

Q: Did you have friends near your home?

A: Yes, I did. I would have nohaga (nanny?) make me obentō and my friends and I would go into the green fields and eat. I liked doing those thigs. This was so many years ago so I don't remember very well.

Q: Did you have undo kai (track or physical education) meetings?

A: Yes, we did. In the old days, all the grammar schols in Sendai met together and ak anual match at Miyagi no Hara. Miyagi no hara is now an expensive housing area, but in my days Miyagi no hara was famous for its beautiful hagi (bush clover) and its been written about in the Man yōshū. When the suzumushi (type of cricket) starts to chirp the radios would broadcast their sound. Miyagi-no-hara was a beautiful and large green field. Akl the grammar school students of Sendai would gather here and have their annual physical education matches.

Q: How many schools participated?

A: There were many schools in Sendai so I don't remember the exact number of grammar schools in Sendai. Perhaps about 15 schools

Q: How was your Kōtō school (higher grammar school) years? What do remember of those years.

A: I always studied in those days. We had a heater called ankan. We put fire in the ankan and cover it with a futon (bedding or blanket) and take it to the room to study with. I don't remember doing much of anything but studying in those days. I rarely went to the movies. I went to the movies only when we had guests visiting us from the countryside. I do not have any particular memories of that period.

Q: What is an ankan?

A: It's a heater. It's about this big with a frame. We put fire inside it. There's a hole on the top and a latch in the front. We put futon on it and we got warm by it while we studied.

Q: Is it like a small kotatsu (Japanese style heater)?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: You must have done well in school.

A: No, I didn't

Q: Where did you go after junior high school?
Did you go to the normal school?

A: Yes, I went to the Ni-bu of the normal school.

Q: How many years did you go to Ni-bu ?

A: I went for one year.

Q: Was this located in the same area?

A: Yes, in Hachiman district of Sendai.

Q: Was it fun there?

A: Well . . . We had to live in a boarding house even though some of us lived in Sendai. I don't have any special memories of this time in my life. I just studied all the time. That's all I did. I do not have any special fond memories.

Q: How old were you when you went to the Ni-but of the Normal school?

A: I was 18 years old.

Q: In those days you weren't allowed to have boy friends, were you?

A: Oh, my goodness, no. Absolutely not.

Q: 18 years old children in America now already have by friends and girl friends.

A: Yes, that's right, but I never thought of the opposite sex at that time in my life. Not at all.

Q: Did you go to Ochanomizu after this?

A: I went to study music at what is now called Tokiyamatsu in Tokyo for a short time. This is where the Hitachi people attend. I studied under Miss Suzuko Mi who wrote the song, "Mashiro-ki Fuji".

Q: Were you thinking fo becoming a singer?

A: No, that was not the reason. A teacher at the normal school suggested that I study music for a while. The teacher came to talk with my father and he gave his approval. My father said ;that if this was what I wanted to do it was alright with him. So, I studied voice for a short while.

Q: How was it? Did you enjoy it?

A: Yes, I liked singing

Q: Did you graduate from that school?

A: No, I just practiced voice delivery and took voice lessons just for a short while. I stayed with Otsuki Sensei, the composor of that song, what was that song called? . . . It goes like this: "watashi no yoji wa

nandakke . . . " His name was Otsuki Teiji. I went to Tikiyamatsu every day from this house and studied voice. At times, we went to see concerts of Nobuko Hana, Kintarō Shimizu and other artists.

Q: Did you have good times?

A: Yes, I did. This was the first time for me to be in Tokyo. I had studied all the time until then and I really enjoyed my life in those days.

Q: What did you think of Tokyo? Did you feel like it was a big city?

A: Oh, yes. Of course Tokyo was quite different from Sendai and I felt it was a large city, but I was so wrapped up with going to Tokiyamatsu and back that I didn't think about much of anything. I only thought about music.

Q: What happened then?

A: The principal told me to submit an application for admission to Ochanomizu Normal School right away because the following day was the deadline date. He told me that music school was fine only for the very young. I sent my report card to the school right away.

Q: Did you pass entrance?

A: Well, barely.

Q: How many years did you go to Ochanomizu?

A: I studied there for 4 years.

Q: Then it was an university?

A: In those days the school was called Ochanomizu Joshi Koto Shinhan Gakkō (Ochanomizu Women's Higher Normal School. I was admitted to the Dairoku Jinji Kōin Joseijo (the 6th) which was part of the Ochanomizu school. In order to enter this division, we had to be recommended by the prefectural authority as well as by the school.

Q: How was college; the life at Ochanomizu?

A: Well. . . . I was happy to be admitted to the school, but above all, I believe the best thing about going to Ochanomizu was that it had many distinguished teachers. There were many splendid teachers in this school

Q: Who taught at this school?

A: Michiko Takea-Sensei was the Empress's Japanese (language) teacher when the present Empress was Crown Princess. Takeda Sensi taught the future Empress and aftershe went to the Palace to teach the Crown princess, she would come to teach us at the Ochanomizu school. Takeda Sensi was an attractive lady, but after she went to teach at the Palace, she became a dignified, noble-looking lady. When one teaches at the Palace, one can not look directly ahead, but had to lower one's eyes. She still had this habit and she stood in front of our class and taught with her eyes lowered. When she returned to school from teaching at the Palace she wore her hakama with the Palace seal on it. She wore those clothes when she taught us. She was indeed a distinguished teacaher. Also, we were taught by Chikako Kuroda Sensi who was the 2nd person in Sendai to receive a Ph.D. degree in Physical Science. She was our science teacher. She was another very distinguished teacher at the school.

Q: Were they teachers of high character also?

A: Yes, theyewere.

Q: Is that what you mean by "distinguished",in reference to their character?

A: Yes, that's correct. I had the honor of being taught by and conversed with the great teachers. I feel this ~~wa~~ interaction was one of the best thing for my development.

Dr. Juishi Aoki, was the medical attendant to the present Emperor when he was a child. Dr. Aoki taught us medicine in our school.

Q: What else do you remember about your school life at Ochanomizu?

A: The founder of Nihon Joshi Taiku Daigaku (The University of Women's Physical Education), now located in Setagaya was my quarentor. She becazme the physcial education teacher at Ochanomizu upon returning from England. She started this university with about 6 students and it has now become a large university. One day, this professor gave us her name card and told us to go watch a festival in Toyama with the entire class. I asked my *Sekan teacher) for permission to go to this festival. She gave me her permission to go, but she said, "when you go there, never talk to a boy." She told me this. Also she said, "if they start singing opera, come home immediately." Opera was very popular in Japan at that time The Toyama University military choir often sang opera and so my teacher told me to leave the campus as soon as they started to sing opera. Although I was told not to speak to boys, I could not avoid them because I had to show them the name card (permit) and I had to chat with them a bit. The social studies teacher was very strict. Although I was told to leave as soon as the boys started to sing opera, we didn't. Since we had gone all the way to the university we decided to stay and listen.

Q: What had happened before this?

A: We did various things. I don't remember clearly what we did before this, but I remember this particular incident because of what my teacher had told me not to do. She said, "absolutely never speak to boys." In those days, if I recaived a letter from a man, whether he be my grandfather or some one else, my teacher would call me into her office and say, "open this le letter here and read it aloud." She would make me open my letter in front of her and read the contents to her. It was such a period.

Yes, that's the kind of period I lived in. It's quite different from the modern times. Male-female relationships were extremely strict in those days.

Q: What did you do for enjoyment during the school years.?

A: We had a "Ryokai" - a dormitroy club - and we organized various programs
Q: for our club activitiez. We sang songs, told stories, and did other activities. One day, we asked a woman from Kagoshima to tell us a story. She got up in fron and began to tell us a story, but we couldn't understand a word of what she was saying. Her accent was so strong. After she finished, we asked her waht story she had just told us and she said the story of Momo Taro. Oh, really, we said. We couldn't even understan the word "momo" in her story. We really cound't mke out what she was saying. The lady's name was Yamaoka. Now that was a very funny incident.

Also, at the 60th birthday of our social studies assistant teacher, we a special red and white mochi, sant songs and celebrated her birthday. I remember these things during my school years. On Saturdays, all of us girls went crazy like broken bee hives because the following day was Sunday. We were all so excited.

Q: What did you do on Sundays?

A: I went to the Rennozakai church for a long time every Sunday. Do you know Seishiro Yuwamura of the Rennozakai? Oh, you don't? Do you know Kogo Kozaki Sensi? You don't? Well, it was their era. There was a man named Kyuji Mitsui who was a Heishunto and he was an ordinary judge.

For the first time in Japan, the Shonen Shinpanjo was established in the 12th year of Taisho and he was its first president. He was such a dedicated Christian and he would tell the children who were sent to him: "all of us are brothers and sisters. There is nothing to worry". The children would be sent away and if they were from a poor family, he would prepare clothing for them or he would take care of them financially as well. He was such a man. His eldest son, Reverend Hisatoshi Matsui graduated from Oberlin University and is with the Naniwa Church in Osaka now. The younger son is a science professor at Sendai University. The daughter married a minister and lives in Osaka.

Q: When was the first time you went to church?

A: When I was 6 years old.

Q: What religion is your family?

A: Buddhists. We lived right across the street from a christian church. The wife of my kindergraten teacher, Mr. Saka, who was a Datoke no Karo, started a kndergraten school. He was also the Sunday school teacher. I went to church as soon as the church was built.in front of our house. I received my baptisimal at 12 years.old.

Q: What did your father say to this?

A: He didn't say anything.

Q: Did he say anything when your received your ------?

A: No, nothing at all.

Q: You did tell your father, didn't you?

A: No, I didn't tell him anything about it.

Q: Oh, you didn't? Did you feel you would get scolded if you told him?

A: No, it wasn't that. I was just baptized quietly.

Q: Have you been quite independent since you were young?

A: No, I do not believe so.

Q: Do you have any other memories about your life in Ochanomizu?

A: Let's see. Kyuji Matsui was a strong advocate of the Heishinto and later became the judge of Daishiin. He attended the Reinozoka Church and taught us Sunday school. Just after our lessons, luch was prepared for us at the church and we had our lunch there. He would tell us students that theoretical knowledge alone was not sufficient and so he took us to various homes like to Nabeshima Koshaku, Morishi-shaku, Yamanouchi-shishaku and other famous homes and he called these trips, the "kitchen tours". He showed us many different things and on the way back we sould stop at a snack shop called "Daruma" right near the Shinobazu Lake (I don't know if it's still standing there) and we ate oshiruko. We would then be taken back to our dormitories. This was our Sunday "work".

Q: Sounds very enjoyable.

A: Oh, it was. I was very lucky to have encountered such a man like Mitsui Sensei. I am very grateful to have met people like Mitsui Sensei.

Q: Did everyone stay at the dormitories.

A: No, not everyone. Some students who lived near the school like those who lived in Hachioji commuted to school, but the majority of the students lived in the boarding homes. There were studnets from every prefecture such as Kokkaido, Kogoshima, Nagasaki, Sendai, Aomori, and Akita. However, a few students who lived near the school lived

at home commuted to school.'

Q: What were the other students doing on Sundays.?

A: Most all the students were studying. My room mate who was also my classmate named Mitomura-san came from Fukui prefecture. She would be huntched over at her desk all day long and studied all the time. She was nicknamed "Ita kamaboko". I was the one who fled school early in the mornings.

Q: Was everyone happy even though they had to study?

A: Are you referring to me?

Q: No, other students.

A: Well, I guess so. I suppose there were students who felt studying was most enjoyable.

Q: Were you allowed to leave the campus?

A: Yes, our curfew was 9:00pm.

Q: What did the other students do off campus?

A: I do not know. I spent my Sundays, as I stated earlier, involved in chruch activities. I was a 2nd year student in Jogakko so I taught a girl named Yōko Matsuoka, the dughter of the renouned Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yoseiki Matuoka.in the mornings and went with Mitsui Sensei's tours in the afternoon. This is how I spent my day.

Q: Did you teach Yoko Matsuoka on Sundays?

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: Did you teach her Sunday school?

A: Yes. I was a 2nd year student at Ochanomizu at that time.

Q: Do you have any other memories of your school days?

A: My school days? . . .

Q: What subject did you like the best?

A: I liked music very much. I liked literature also. I studied music with Chōko Yasashi Sensei and studied violin under Aoki Sensei. Do you know Kichizo Nakamura the (ikisaku)? She was his wife.

Q: What time did you have to wake up in the dormitory?

A: What time did we get up? I . . .

Q: Was it fairly early?

A: I believe it was around 7:00am. I was always very sleepy in the mornings in those day.s I disliked the morning bells and always thought of home and how I would be able to stay in bed longer at home. I really longed to stay in bed longer. 9:00pm was lights-out, I believe. During the test week, we would take our lamps and go to another room, put blankets over us and study. The dorm mother would come around and check for lights and after she left we turn our lights back on and ontinue to study together under the blankets. Yes, I remember these incidents. Remember, in Natsume Sosek's book. Bottchan and how he packed himself in ice as he rode in the jinrikisha? We did the same thing when we rode the trains to Ueno. We would go see a movie like this. I always remember this whenever I think of my schoool years. We put ice in bamboo boxes in my days and rode the jinrikisha. Whenever I see Botchan, I think of my school days.

Q: Did you wear hakama in those days?

A: Yes, we all wore hakamas. However, we wore Wester-style shoes. We were very interesting looking sight, weren't we?

Q: Were there any students who got into trouble?

A: No, not in my class.

Q: W at about in other classes?

A: No, I don't remember if there were such persons. I don't believe there were any, though.

Q: Were there any girls disciplined because of strict male-female regulations?

A: No, I don't believe so. Not to my recollection.

Q: Did you have annual trips in college?

A: Yes, we did. I remember going to Hakone. It's so easy to go to Hakone now, but in those days we had to wear waraji (straw sandals) to go there. I did not know how to wear waraji so the lady at the inn would show us how to put it on. When it rained, I would slip and slide inthe waraji and the straw would come untied. Oh, I had a horrible time. We climbed to the top of Hakone.

Q: How many days did it take?

A: One night. We spent one night and returned the following day.

Q: You were all you city ladies to that's why this happened?

A: We just didn't know anything aout those things. Now, you are able to go to Hakone by car in such good road conditions, but in my day, we had to wear waraji and walk all the way.

Q: What did you do for fun?

A: Oh, We ate, then come right back to school. We would be back in time for our next class.

Q: You were then able to leave the campus any time you wished?

A: Yes, we could.

Q: Was the Ochanomizu College and the dormitory behind walls?

A: Yes, we had a fence.

Q: Was the college and the dormitory behind the fence?

A: Our domitory called Daibi Dormitory was in Ageba. Ageba is up the hill from Iidabshi. I stayed at the #2 dormitory.

Q: So, you could go into the city anytime, couldn't you?

A: Yes, we could. We all had to be back by 9:00pm. We weren't allowed out every night, though. 9:00pm was our curfew, even on Sundays.

Q: What happened after you graduated?

A: The year before I graduated in October, Takeshi Ito, a principal of the Normal School came to the National Principal's Conference in Tokyo and he helped me decide on my career. That is to say, he arranged for me to go back to my old high school, my al mater, the Sendai Dai-Ni Koto Jogakko. All the graduating students must submit to the Ministry of Education, the #1 and #2 location preferences. I was very fortunate and was assigned to my high schoool alma mater. There were some Tokyo students who were sent to Akita and Hokkaido and to other prefectures. I was very fortunate to be appointed to my post.

Q: Are you appointed to your post at the National Principal's Conference?

A: No, I don't believe so. I don't quite know the procedure, but I believe the schools chose the appropriate teacher for their school. It depends on what type of teachers are needed in the school. For example, if a school is short on a mathmetic teacher, it will request a mathematic teacher. I believe this is how it is done. Ito Sensei had already decided in October that I would return to my alma mater. Therefore, I filled out the Mombusho application requesting a post in Sendai at the

Dai Ni Koto Jogakko, a prefectural school, for the following school year in March.

Q: Are you appointed by the Mombusho?

A: Yes, the written appointment is sent by the Mombusho. This is how it was don in my days.

Q: What was your graduation ceremony like?

A: Graduation ceremony . . . all the members of the school gathered and . . . actually the graduation was like other graduations.

Q: How many graduated?

A: Gee . . . I wonder how many were in my graduating class . . . I don't remember the exact number.

Q: Were there 100 students?

A: Oh, no there weren't that many in my graduating class. No, not that many graduated together in my department. I believe there were less than 50 students.

Q: How many graduated together in the entire school?

A: There were close to 200 students who graduated in the entire school.

Q: There were various departments within the school, right? Like home-economics, scienc, language . . .

A: Yes. Unlike the present days, our school only had 3 departments, science, home economics, and literature in those days. Now, the school has many more departments, such as clothing, nutrition and other more specific majors. However, we only had 3 departments during my time.

Q: Then did you belong to the music department? Literature?

A: Musch was only my hobby. That's all, just for a short time.

Q: You then returned to Sendai, right?

A: That's correct.

Q: Did your father still live in Sendai at that time?

A: Yes, he did. I was married the following yar and went to Aomori. My husband, Sasaki, decided to go to America while we were in Aomori.

Q: What led you and Mr. Sasaki on the road to marriage?

A: There is a church called Isubashi in Sendai. We were introduced by the minister of that church.

Q: You worked for a yar after your returned to Sendai, right?

A: The only thing I remember about that period is: I turly felt sorry for the students I taught.

Q: Why was that?

A: I had absolutely no experience as a treacher. I've read many books since then and have experience and know some things now and also have appropriate teaching materials so I feel confident in being able to teach young students. But, at that time, I had just graduated from school without any experience in teaching at all. I felt very sorry for students whom I taught. I believe I did them injustice. This is the only feeling I have about that period in my life.

Q: Was teaching fun?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: How many students did you have?

A: In the entire school?

Q: No, just in your class.

A: EAch teacher had about 40 students. Each grade had 2 sections each. So, let's say there were about 50 students per section, so ther were 100 lst grade students in all.

Q: As a home economy teach, did you teach all the students in home economy?

A: Yes, I taught many different subjects. My former teacher, Ōi Sensei the founder of the University of Home Economics who taught at our alma mater after she returned from studying abroad in England, told us that

home economcs is an integrated academic subject. For example, when we teach about bowls, we tell thestudents about the area where the bowls were made and other artistic information about the korin and the artist. In sum, home economics is a subject which integrates many different areas. I remember vividly her telling us these things and made a very deep and lasting inpression on me. I believe in this very much.

Q: What did you teach your students in class?

A: I lectured mostly.

Q: In what areas?

A: In various areas.

Q: Such as family fiances and such things like that?

A: Yes, that's right. I taught many topics and if we divide them we would get such things as sewing, laudry methods, domestic economics, home planning, and many other topecs. Now, the subjects are taught independely, however, in my days, one teacher had to teach all these topics. That's why I said that I felt sorry for my students who were taught by such an un-experienced teacher such as I.

Q: Di you ever have any probelms or bad encounters in class?

A: No, nothing in particular.

Q: Students in those days were very obedient, weren't they?

A: Oh, yes, of course. All the students listened to the teacher. When I returned home after 37 years, my students had a class reunion for me. My studnets were all over 60 years old and one former student said to me, "Sensei, I have 11 grandchildren. You are younger than me."

Q: A minister introduced you to your future husband,right?

A: Yes, thats correct.

Q:

Q: Was your marriage a miyai (an arranged marriage)?

A: Yes, it was. However, both of us went to the same church so I knew him. I didn't have any special interest in him, though.

Q: What was Mr. Sasaki doing at this time? Was he already a minister?

A: No, he wasn't. He was about to take over his father's position. His father was a director of a bureau (in the government).

Q: What kind of bureau director was he?

A: A chief of the Post office. He worked in the teishinsho.

Q: What is a teishinsho?

A: We called that office teishinsho in my days, but now its called the post office. His father wanted him to carry on the family tradition.

Q: So, was Mr. Sasaki preparing for that job?

A: Yes.

Q: Was the miyai conducted then?

A: Yes, our minister took us.

Q: Where did he take the two of you?

A: He took us to a hot spring area, an areal called Aramaki near Sendai.

Q: What happened then? Did you have dinner or something?

A: The three of us had dinner together.

Q: What did the minister say?

A: What do you mean?

Q: Well, what did he say to the both of you? Did he encourage the two of you to get together or something?

A: I don't really remember.

Q: Were you surprised at the new events?

A: No, not really. I've been attending the Church since I was a child. So, I wasn't really surprised when I heard about our miyai. I had considered doing some type of work in that line at that time - a type of work involving the church.

Q: Was he involved in the church at that time?

A: Well . . . he went to A oyama so he could attend a theological seminary.

Q: Did you go with him?

A: No.

Q: Was this before or after your marriage?

A: Before we were married.

Q: So you knew he was going to become a mimister before the marriage?

A: Y es, I did.

Q: The minister encouraged the two of you to marry, right?

A: Yes.

Q: What did you think of your future husband?

A: Sasaki is a very serious and fastidious man. For example, if he saw a crooked pencil, he would straighten it out. He always laid his hakama on the floor after he wore it and he ould put the futon on top of it so the wrinkles would be gone by the next morning. He was a fastidious man. He also was very detail conscious.

Q: Did you feel that he was a very handsome man at the time of the miyai?

A: No, it never occurred to me (laugh).

Q: Did you feel you could be with him the rest of your life?

A: Yes, of course I did.

Q: What else did you feel about marrying Mr. Sasaki?

A: W ell, I didn't think too much about it. I knew I would work hard for the church with my future husband when he became a minister.

This is what I thought of. I didn't have any other particular thoughts.

Q: Did you obey the minister immediately when he suggested the match to you?

A: Actually, I was not asked directly by our minister. A go-between came to my father with the proposition and after my father approved, the arrangements were made. Marriage in the olden days had its proper order, so unlike the present day. Marriage was not arranged directly by the couple, but the parents had to be approached first.

Q: Was your biggest obstacle your father. That is to say, would you only marry if your father approved?

A: My father was not a type of man who would restrict me from marrying

Q: Did your father know that your future husband would be attending the theology school?

A: Sasaki had alrady completed his thological training when the talk of marriage began. We were married a year after I started to work at the Daini Jogakko.

Q: You, of course had a Christian style wedding ceremony?

A: Yes, we did. We were married at a church in Aomori by Reverend Yamata's father, Genkichi Yamata. Reverend Genkichi Yamata came from Hiroshima to Aomori to marry us.

Q: Did you father attend the wedding?

A: Yes, my entire family attended the wedding.

Q: Did your father object to you having a Christian wedding?

A: No, he didn't say anything.

Q: What was a Christian wedding like in those days?

A: We didn't have flower girls or such attendants in the wedding in those days. The go-between walked with me to the alter and the male go-between took the groom to the alter. The two of us stood in front of the alter and [redacted] married. We didn't have attendats

Q: Then the wedding vows were conducted?

A: Yes.

Q: Were you allowed to kiss?

A: No, I just received the wedding ring.

Q: Did he put on the ring, too?

A: Do, men couldn't wear wedding rings in those days. Such things were unheard of.

Q: Did you have a reception after the ceremony?

A: Yes, we did. We had it on the second floor of the church.

Q: What happened then?

A: Then . . . Sasaki was sent to America.

Q: How did that come about?

A: I believe it was at the invitation of the Annual Pacific Coast Methodist Convention. Sasaki went to America alone in 1925. Hee became a member of the Methodist church in Seattle. I remained in Japan. Just about the same time, I heard that a girl's school was looking for a home economics instructor and I applied for the position through a friend of mine. So, I went to teach at Aizu Koto Jogakko. Aizu is a very cold area. During the really cold season, the window panes would freeze and the ice would glitter on the window. It was so cold there that my father felt sorry for me. He found a teaching position in Sendai. He and the president of what is now called Nishima University were friends. This university had established a department of higher educational instruction. That is to say, a department which trained students to become teachers were encorporated into the University. I was invited to teach in that deaprtment. My father had been worried for me because Aizu was so cold and he was trying to find a position for me in Sendai.

I taught at the University for two years until I left for America.

Q: How long did you stay in Wakatsu?

A: Only for about two years.

Q: So, you and your husband was separated during this period?

A: Yes, that's right.

Q: How long were you married before he left for America? A year or so?

A: Yes . . . we were married a year beforethe big earthquake, . . . that was in 1920 . . . so we were married in 1921. Sasaki went to America in 1925. We were married for 4 years.

Q: What was Reverend Sasaki's first name?

A: Yonosuke.

Q: Where did he go to in America?

A: To Seattle. T o the Seattle Methodist Church. He went there as an assistant minister and lived with Reverend Yamata.

Q: Did your husband write and tell you about the life in America?

A: No, nothing at all. He never told me about the life in America. He returned to Japan to take me back to America with him and I received a telegram the day before he was due to arrive home.

Q: Did you want to come to America?

A: I didn't feel like I wanted to go or not to go particularly. My husband said "Come" so I Went.

Q: What were some of your predonceived ideas about America?

A: I didn't go through an preparations to go to America. None at all. I ffigured that as long as I stayed by Sasaki, everything would be fine.

Q: How did you leave Japan? That is to say, did you have to go through many examinations and such?

A: Oh, yeas.

Q: You came in 1925, right?

A: No, I cam in 1928, but Sasaki came in 1925. The examinationswwere very strict in those days. I brought two children with me, a son and a daughter. My son lives in New York now.

Q: You taught while raising your children?

A: Yes, I had my younger sister live with us who majored in child psychology in college. Of course, we had maids, but I had my younger sister live with us. I told my father that I would take care of all her wedding expenses if she would be allowed to stay with me. So, I borrowed my sister. She was a child psychology major and she took care of the two children while I was at work. Therefore, I invited this siter to America the year before last for three months and let her have fun in America. She came in September and left in November.

Q: Did you go to the hospital to have your children?

A: Do, we all had mid-wives in the old days.

Q: Did you st udy child birth and about children in school?

A: Y es, I studied those things in school, of course. We had mid-wives as church members so two of the ladies came to help me and they toook very good care of me. The eldest son was born in Aizu and one of my student's mother acted as a mid-wife and she helped me a great deal. The principal of the school in Aizu allowed me to take a leave of absence for a while after childbirth. They were very kind to me there.

Q: What kind of procedure did you go through in order to come to this country?

A: Sasaki returned to Japan for us and he took care of everything.

Q: But, didn't you have to go through medical exams and such things?

A: Oh, yes. We had phycial examinations and even a (uhclear) esam. They examined us thoroughly in those days.

Q: Were you able to get a passport right away?

A: Yes, we were.

Q: So, Reverend Sasaki returned to Japan to bring you and your children back to America?

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: How did you feel when you were about to leave Japan?

A: Actually, I wasn't that sad because I was with my husband.

Q: Were you happy to see your husband after being separated for 4 years?

A: Well, yes, of course I was happy to see my husband again. I kept a large picture of him to remind our children who their father was Then when my husband returned home, my son said to him, "who is this ojichan". He said that to his father. We really got a good laugh at this.

Q: How was voyage to America?

A: I was seasick for 2 or 3 days, but I was fine the rest of the trip. Our son was 3 years old and our daughter was 5 years old. A man aboard the ship with us who had just lost his wife was very kind and atte ntive to our son. This man treated him as though he was his own soon. He looked after our son which was a great help for me.

Q: Which class did you come here?

A: I believe we came by 2nd class. We certainly couldn't afford a 1st class ticket.

Q: Was the voyage enjoyable?

A: The first 2 or 3 days was quite bad for me, but the rest of the time was alright. I was busy taking care of my children. If one goes on an ocean voyage now, one can go on the deck of the ship and view the moon or the stars or other romantic things, but we ddidn't have the time to do such a thing. I was so busy taking care of the children, putting them to sleep and putting myself to sleep after a long day. In the afternoon, I had to be sociable to other passengers.

Q: What kind of people were on board the ship with you?

A: There were many different people on board with us. I'm not positive of their professions, but there were farmers and such people like that.

Q: Were there any picture brides on the ship with you?

A: No, there weren't. Picture brides were banned since 1924 so there weren't any of them on the ship with us.

Q: So, only couples were allowed to immigrate?

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: Were other Ajapanese allowed to immigrate?

A: I don't know what the regulations were regarding Japanese immigration. H owever, the number of immigrants were predetermined by the government. I believe only 100 some Japanese immigrants are allowed annually into America presently, is that right?

Q: I believe the number is greater.

A: Is that right? I do not know much about this area.

Q: Did you stop in Hawaii?

A: Yes, we did. We got off the ship and visited Reverend Komoru who was the minister at the Methodist Church in Hawaii. He werved us

ric rice and tsukemono and oh, it was so delicious. We had dinner there and it was delicious.

Q: The food abroad the ship wasn't too good, I take it.

A: No, it wasn't. I remember the Reverend gave us a tour of the area and we returned to our ship.

Q: Do you remember anything else about the trip?

A: No, not at all. I've forgotten about the trip completely. I just remember my hands were full with taking care of our children.

Q: Where did you land next?

A: We landed in Suisun . . . no, in San Francisco.

Q: Did you have to go to Angle Island?

A: No, I don't think we did.

Q: Perhaps the government wasn't using Angle Island any longer.

A: Just a moment, let me think about this. This was our first trip to America so perhaps we did go to Angle Island.

Q: But you don't remember too much about it?

A: No, I don't. Did we go to Angle Island, I wonder.

Q: It's alright. What did you do after you landed?

A: We went to Suisun from San Francisco by train.

Q: Did you leave on the same day as you arrived?

A: No, we spent the night at an inn owned by Mr. Arima, a fellow church member in San Francisco. We then left for Suisun. I had promised my cousin back in Japan that I would always wear Japanese clothes because I am a Japa nese woman. I promised her I'd never wear Western clothes. My cousin told me that I wouldn't be able to do what I said, but I insisted. I saind, "No, I am a Japanese woman." I had bragged to her like that, but once I came to America I couldn't keep my vow. I couldn't very well wear my hakama. So,

I ended up wearing western clothes like everyone else. I did, however, arrive in my Japanese clothes.

Q: Most people usually changed to Western clothes immediately, but you didn't?

A: No, I didn't. I wore my Japanese clothes.

Q: Did you stay in Suisun?

A: No, we went from Suisun to Vacaville. We lived in Vacaville for 4 years. The attendance at the church in Vacaville gradually decreased, so we had to move to the Florin church here in Sacramento.

Q: What was your first impressions of Vacaville?

A: I had nev er seen such a rural area like Vacaville in Japan. I grew up in the city and I only knew about city life. When you would ride for awhile, you would see people left theirllamp lights on all the time. If you go towards the mountains from Vacaville, there's a valley called sennin and an old man named Odashiro-san lived in a log cabin in the style of President Lincoln. His cabin home had a dirt floor. This is how this man lived. He was called the sage of seein valley. Mr. Odashiro was an extremely dedicated man from Iwata prefecture. He graduated from what is now called the Hokkaido Zenshin Nogakko (Advanced school of Agriculture of Hokkaido He stayed at the home of the former president of Nichi-bei newspaper, Mr. Abiko who married Sen Tsuda, the younger sister of Umeko Tsuda. Well, Mr. Odashiro stayed at the som of Sen Tsuda as an apprentice. He wouldn't do anything about his own home, but whenever our church need any fixing, he would always do all the fixing for us. His own home had dirt floor, but he would do anything for the church. He would walk to church on Sundays. Some people would offer him a

ride on a horse and buggy, but he'd refuse saying, "today is Sunday. Animals need a day of rest, too." He was this type of man.

Q: Was he a bachelor?

A: Y es, he always wrote to us once a week when we were in Japan so we were very curious to meet him. After we met him, we like him immediately and asked him to become a member of our family, to become our ojiichan (grandfather). But he said, "no, that cannot be." However, our home was always open to him. He would take baths over at our house. He would give him a suit whenever his suit became worn out. He was just like our ojiichan.

Q: What was Vacaville like when you went there?

A: It still looked like it came right out of the western cowboy movies. The streets had side walks just like in the movies. It was so long ago. However, schools were very nice. Our children went to school in Vacaville; our daughter entered kindergarten there. Vacaville was indeed a rural town.

Q: Were there many bachelors living there?

A: There probably were, but I don't really know for sure since we lived away from the Japanese section of the town. I believe there were bachelors.

Q: Gambing must have been quite popular with them. Do you know about this?

A: No, I don't.

Q: What kind of harships did you face in Vacaville and in working in the church?

A: We did not really have any harships.

Q: Well, it doesn't have to be harships in particular, but what was your life like at that period in your life?

A: Well, I occupied myself with church activities, such as teaching Sunday school, conducting Japanese school and things of that nature. I did not experience any particular hardships at that time.

Q: Was Reverend Sasaki's salary good in those days?

A: Oh, no. His salary was not good. We did not receive too much offerings, either.

Q: How did you supplement your income?

A: We didn't do anything. We survived on what we received.

Q: Did you have days when you had to go without food?

A: No, we didn't.

Q: Why did the church close down in Vacaville?

A: The church membership gradually decreased and the church was turned into a barrack, so we moved to the Florin church.

Q: Did Reverend Sasaki receive his salary from the nenkai?

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: He was like a missionary, then?

A: I believe my husband received some money from both the church and the nenkai. I don't know for sure, especially how much he received from the nenkai. I never paid particular attention to money . . .

Q: Who took care of the finances?

A: Of course, I did. We made do with what we had. Our children were still young, so the expenses weren't too high.

Q: Why did the church membership decrease in Vacaville?

A: Some of the members began to go to different churches and some

others left town to go south for picking cotton. These are some of the factors which contributed to a decreased membership.

Q: What do you remember about the time you were at the Vacaville church?

A: There was a man named Frank Back, ( ) and an old man named Mr. Higashiyama who was a cook for 35 years. This man had 3 grandchildren who were a little mentally retarded. His youngest grandchild, Mari, was a very bright girl; she had the 3 of the other chi dlren's intelligence. These children always came to Japanese school and did learn a little Japanese. Of course, they didn't do as well as Mari, but they learned. The children weren't allowed to go to regular school or to other people's Christmas activities. So we had our small plays and Mari would play the piano. The participants were limited and our activities were on a small scale, but we did have our holiday activities. I really don't have any special memories of Vacaville. I just remember these poor children, and in fact, I heard about them a few days ago. They are all over 60 years old and still alive. Their mother, Okigo-san, is still living also. She took care of her children all by herself. I remember them well and they were very kind to us while we were living in Vacaville. If you asked me what I remember of that time in my life, I remember the Higashiyama family and their sad situation. I always wondered if something couldn't have been done. Their mother was a very hard working woman who could do anything. I wondered sometimes if their mother could have been more patient and taught them to do certain things on their own. I feel that then perhaps something could have been done for them, but the mother was impatient and she did everything for them. I remember this one family, the Higashiyama. I felt very sorry for them. They

were very dedicated Christians. Vacaville church was just a rural church and so there weren't any special incidents. Nothing special or unusual happened.

Q: What were the residents of Vacaville doing at that time?

A: Some owned large ranches; most were farmers. The armers owned their land and others leased large ranches to farm on. Majority of the residents were farmers.

Q: How many people came to church on Saundays?

A: About 20 people. The church was very small. I would say about 20 to 30 members.

Q: Were there any interesting events in Vacaville?

A: No, not really.

Q: How did you handle child education?

A: Do you mean for my own children?

Q: Yes.

A: I believe that children should be trained at young ages. I believe in the saying, "cultivate the mind at a young age." I believe it is most important to teach a child many things at a young age. For example, I taught my child how to hold the chopsticks properly when she was 3 years old. Wherever my children went, they knew how to eat properly. Another example is the way they talk. Children do not know what are good or bad works, so it is our duty to speak properly because the children will imitate their parents. Children should learn these things gradually. Even when they are older and are going to college, good manners must be exhibited by the parents. When they write home from school, usually "arigato" should be a sufficient reply, but I always want my children to

learn correct manners so I would write back "arigato gozaimasu" (thank-you very much for your letter). When I reply in this way, the children write back in the same manner. When they write to others, they will always write in the proper manner to all the other people. I tried to raise my children in these ways. I also believe in differentiating between the sons and daughters. The eldest son was always treated with distinction as the eldest son. I always tried to pay close attention to these things. I also taught my children to pray before dinner no matter how good or bad prayer might be. They were to say, "Lord, thank you very much for this food and please help us be good children". I taught them to say this every day since they were 3 years old. They said this simple prayer every day.

Q: Do you remember anything else about your life in Vacaville?

A: No, I really don't have any special memories of Vacaville.

Q: Did you live in the Church? Did you have living quarters in the church?

A: Yes. Our children were still young so we weren't able to leave whenever we needed to.

Q: How old were your children?

A: They were 3 and 5 years old.

Q:

A: Oh, yes, this happenedone day. My eldest duaghter had done something wrong and I put her in the closet as a punishment. She cried and began to sing "shiware wa aisu shosu". I felt so sorry for her and let her out. I rarely discipline my children so severely, but I did it once. My daughter began singing a hymn in the closet. I remember that well. When my sister was taking care of them, she used to read a book called "Children's Poetry" to them. One poem

went like this: "What rolls and rolls on the roof, It will capture your dreams, it's the sound of the dream care." The book contained many good poems. My sister would read this book to my children as a bed time treat. I remembered my sister did t is often and I continued the practice. I told them bed-time sories as well. Vacaville was a very peaceful uneventful town.

Q: You didn't really actually see the hardships of the Issei in Vacaville since you were in the house mostly?

A: Actually the farmers were not going through any particular hardships them. Many of them owned large rances or were farmers on large ranches. Or, some men were like Mr. Higashiyama who worked in a large ranch with good pay. I really did not see any so-called hardships. There weren't many poor people, either.

Q: Was life pretty stable, then?

A: Yes.

Q: What was your husband's work like?

A: In Vacaville?

Q: Yes.

A: In the old days, churches were separated into white churches and J Japanese churches. Discrimination was quite severe in those days. Unlike the work done by ministers now, working with various other churches, my husband's work was involved just his church.

Q: Were any of the Japanese people in Vacaville persecuted?

A: No, they weren't.

Q: Did you hear of such a story?

A: No, I never heard of such a story. I don't think such a thing happened in Vacaville. Although we didn't stay there for a long time so we really didn't know too much, but Vacaville was a peaceful

town while we lived there.

Q: What was Reverend Sasaki like as a man?

A: To put it into one word, he was a special product of Tohoku.

Q: What do you mean by that?

A: He weighted and considered things deeply. Unlike men from Kansai, who are light heared and jovial, my husband wasn't like that at all. He was direct. Unlike the Kansai people who are so eloquent, my husband was a plain speaker. He really didn't have social finesse. H owever, he had a strong character and felt things very deeply. He loved people from this heart. He just wasn't flamboyant or eloquent like firecracker, like Kansai people are. That's why I said he was a special product of Tohoky only. He didnt' say things lightly.

Q: Did you have opportunities to do things for fun as a family?

A: Our children were quite young still; they were only 3 and 5 years old, so we weren't able to do many things together. We sent our oldest to school, kindergarten, right away and after she came home, my younger child and I would pretend to be students and my daughter would teach us everything she learned that day. My daughter was a little chatter box. We had fun in this manner. We didn't even really celebrate birthdays in those days. Life was pretty uneventful and dry.

Q: Did you send her to a kindergarten taught in English?

A: Y es, she would come home, pretend that we were students and teach us what she learned that day. Vacaville . . . in those days . . . we weren't invited to birthday parties nor did we invite children.

Q: What was Reverend Sasaki's specialty?

A: Specialty? I don't think he had a specialty. I really don't know. He was very good in calligraphy. His sermons were old fashioned.

He gave sermons in the same mamner that had been taught to him. He wasn't particularly that good.

Q: Vacaville church was closed . . .

A: YYes, we were the last family there and the Board of Missions closed the church. We moved to the Florin church in 1931.

Q: Depression began around 1930, right?

A: Yes, that's true. 1929, 1930, 1931 was the wort period of the depression.

Q: How did it affect you in Vacaville?

A: We really didn't feel its impact in Vacaville, but we were affected by the depression when we moved to the Forin church.

Q: When did you come to Florin?

A: In 1931.

Q: What do you remember about the move to Florin?

A: We moved to Florin in the afternoon so most of the people were at work. The keys were left at the neighbors house, at the Yasui's. Yasui-san opened the church for us. The members of the church came to visit us that evening. Ministers in those days were very poor and we just didn't have any provisions for emergencies. The ministers now days are like (odaigo). The children were still quite young in those days and we didn't have anyone working. Husband wives were working very hard in the farms and still didn't earn enough. Many members of the church told us during the worst period of the depression that they didn't even have 5¢ to spare. 24 straberyy boxes made up a case, double the present number and the workers were paid 24¢. The membersof the Florin church worked so very hard in the strawberry fields. Only those with American citizenships were allowed to buy land in those days. One had to wait until the children were old enough so the parents could buy land

in their names. Some people borrowed another person's name in order to buy land. The Florin strawberries were delicious. Mr. Tsukamaoto, the grandfather of one of our present member, who had come to this country in 1894, created an economical way of raising strawberries. The soil in this area is not very good so the farmers couldn't cultivate plants which needed deep rooting. However, strawberries do not need to be rooted deeply, so growing strawberries were ideal. The ditches had to be hoed deeply to water the plants. In-between the rows of plants and ditches, Mr. Tsukamoto began to plan grape vines. As the strawberry season waned, the grape season would start. The farmers could cultivate the crops one after another. Grandfather Tsukamoto began this system of raising crops.

Q: What was the minister's housing like?

A: Oh, it was quite small and pitiful. We had one parlor, two bedrooms in the back, a bathroom and a kitchen. There were four of us when we came to live in this house, but we had 3 more children after coming to live here. So, 7 of us lived in this small house. We didn't have anything, not even a closet. now days, the members of the church have learned about some of the needs of the minister's housing and are concerned about this problem. But, as I just stated, the members had small children and were inexperienced and above all, their own homes were like ours. They were just able to maintain their own home and couldn't really be concerned with the minister's houseing. However, we were able to make ends meet and survived all of this.

Q: How many members were there in the Florin Church?

A: About 50 members in all. Later the membership increased to 400 or 500 people.

All the members were very good people. They weren't city dwellers, but were rural people so their hearts were pure. all of us enjoyed living in Florin. The Church members were particularly kind to our children. When our youngest son was about 3 years old, he asked his elder brother, "Brother, do you think we can buy Sakakibara ojichan's son for $5?" The elder son, who was only a a year or two older answered, "np, he wouldn't sell him for just $5. I think if we spent $10, maybe then he would sell him." I still remember this conversation between the two of them. This is how much our children were treated kindly by the church members. These two have two have passed away. The Florin Church members were all good people.

Q: How many years were you at the Florin Church?

A: From 1931 to the beginning of World War II. We were there for about 11 years.

Q: Do you remember anything else about the Depression?

A: As I said earlier, 24 boxes of strawberries paid only 25 cents, but the workers had to put up with the cheap wages. They couldn't very well destroy the crops. One flat in those days consisted of double the number of boses presently packed, but the farmers still worked for that price. Muri-san would also pick ab ut one crate of strawberries before going to school. In those days, the workers received 35 cents an hour. They would get paid only $3.50 for the whole day. Of course, it's true that the value of the dollar

was much higher in those days, but still this is what the working conditions were like in those days. One year around this time, Reverend Kosaburo Baba was our guest minister for a month. He was a much older man. When this minister preached and gave a prayer, some members of the congregation would feel the holy spirit go through them and they would fall down from the chair. I saw this with my own eyes. If if he put oil on you and prayed, tonsolitis would be cured. He worked miracles like that. When I saw this, I often wondered why I could not be as dedicated as Reverend Baba. I would have these thoughts in bed at night. Then one night while I was asleep, a huge fire lit up in my room. I was in the fire, but the fire was not hot. I climbed up the stairs and the fire followed right behind me. And in this dream I said to myself, the fire is burning out all my bad parts of me. The Bible states that there is the fire of the seirei (Holy Spirit), but I believe I was physically shown this fire because my faith was not very strong. Yes, I have had thoughts about these things. I have also seen the figure of Jesus very clearly in my dreams. I have had three profound dreams in my life. The second one was about Tengu being sent down to earth from the Heaven by a trumpet. He landed in our hall located in back of our house, a hall which holds about 800 people. The members of the Church were all around him and they were waiting for him. He began to give a sermon to the

people, looking to his left then to his right. I waited for him over here and just as I was wondering what kind of language he was speaking, I woke up. I had the third dream when I was about to enter the Ochanomizu school. I saw the rising sun against Mt. Fuji, not the real Mt. Fuji, but on a screen. I thought to myself, "Yes, I'm going to Ochanomizu". This was a hatsuyume (the first dream of the New Year), in January. I had another memorable dream. I opened a church located in France. I don't know the exact location but a beautiful picture of the Last Supper was hanging on the wal of this church. As I was gazing at it with rapture, the picture disappeared.

Every year I conducted a play for Easter. That year for some reason, I just couldn't think of a theme for a play. I racked my brains, but nothing.

Q: Did you wirte your own plays?

A: Yes. One evening I dreamt about 5 intelligent girls and 5 foolish girls. They were wearing beautiful clothes with bright colors and they carried an oil pot. I thought to myself, "Yes, this is it". I developed 6 parts from this dream for a play. The first part was about waiting for Jesus with the oil pot; then asking for the oil from the 5 foolish girls; then the five girls going to buy the oil; then Jesus arrives, and then finally the doors close. That's what the play was about. Mary was very good on the piano

so we did our play with the piano. The play turned out to be very good. We did not have any rehersals, though. There was no time . This all happened when Reverend Baba was visiting us and giving his wermons. From then on, the members of the congregation became very dedicated believers and their faith deepened. The people came to church directly from the the fields to be with each other. They came with their work clothes directly to Church. The membership increased to 100. All the members and their families would gather together at the Ichido and have Thanksgiving dinner. We had one very good cook and he supervised the dinner. We didn't have turkey, but we had chicken. The members were all mostly farmers so chicken and eggs were quite abundant. We asked the members to clean the chicken so it would be ready to be roased. But xome people would bring in live chicken in a bag. Jimmy Sakakibara was our permanent chicken nech wringer. We would see a headless chicken flapping its wings everywhere. We really had fun and enjoyed our dinner. This is how we had our Thanksgiving dinner - all together with 100 people. This tradition has continued to this day. Sacramento and Florin churches became one and they are still continuing this tradition. I hard just the other day that they are already preparing for the Dinner.

Q: Did youuhave a place that would hold that many people?

A: Yes, we had a large hall. Sunday school had to be divided into many

groups and even our parlor was used for this purpose. The various Sunday school classes were divided up into clusters in the hall and the Sunday School teachers conducted their lessons in this manner. The plays usually turned out well, thanks to the members of the Church In retrospect, I wish I had taken some pictures of the palys that we had put on. I believe we could have used the pictures to make a book.

We also built a Japanese school attended only by the members of our congregation. I taught the children the fundamentals of Japanese, from IROHA. We put on plays from the very simplest like, "Grandpa and Grandma of Shitakiri Swallow" to the more complicated like "Sendai Hagi (bush clover)", "Ichi no Tagi Futa Bako", "Kasuka no Tsuzume", "Hamlet, " "Merchant of Venice", and things like that. Every August, we would put these plays on and to have the Isseis enjoy them, I would have to enlarge the plays. The children learned traditional Japanese language, starting from the IROHA and so they spoke in the old style Japan se. In those days, I always had to perfrom traditional things and therefore, I was expected to know about the olden times. We used to show movies to encourage Church members to participate inour Japanese school. I would watch how the samurai put his katana (sword) away, how they sat and so forth in the movies in case I was asked to do similar things. I made the children chonmage and daisho myself whenever we were

doing traditional plays. We still have pictures of them.In this way, we put on large plays involving the Japanese school and our reputations began to gradually rise. The two of us were awarded a golden plaque on our 2600th anniversay ad distinguished overseas educators.

Q: Who were you awarded by?

A: I believe the group was called the Association of Overseas Educators.

Q: Did your husband also receive the ward?

A: Yes, both of us.

The students really learned Japanese well. It isn't enought to just teach the language, bu we must also teach them proper manners. Parents do not always have time to teach their children extensive manner because they are so busy. There, I taught the children the proper way to hold chopsticks and the proper way to sit and so forth. My old students still talk about this even to this day. They say to each other "remember we were taught the proper way to sit on the chair by our Sensei?" When my son was going to Kyoto University, he had dinner at a family's house. I suppose what he had larned at a very young age surfaced, and he sat at the dinner table very properly. This surpised the hosts and they asked him, "my goodness, who taught you such good manners?" He replied, "my mother taught me when I was little." When he was relaying this story, he said, "mother, aren't I smart?" I said, "no, you're not

the smart one. It's because I taught you such good manners." (laugh). Even if you don't work at it purposefully, then the time comes, the appropriate manner comes up. So, I believe that we should teach our children proper things when they are young. I think this is very important in home education. When I look at the education of the children these days, I feel that home education is indeed lacking.

Q: Did you teach your children proper Japanese manners, ;in the Japanese tradition?

A: Yes, we must always keep in mind and heart that we are Japanese. But, I feel that American education is such that it compells everyone to throw away your own tradition and have just one American culture. I began to form this opinion much later after I came to this country. We all tried to do this at one time, but it didn't go over too well. Japanese have Japanese culture, Germans have their own and the Spanish have Spanish culture. So, we must maintain our good traditions and combine it to make one good culture. I believe this is what make American culture. Mary feels the same way I do and she teacher her children many things about Japanese traditions. Mary tells me now that I was the one who laid the foundations for such a way of thinking. I told her, "it's not that at all. It's you're own way of thinking." It's difficult to just have one culture for us.

Q: As a Japanese, what do you think is the best part of Japanese charact

A: I believe it is the tradition of taking care of the parents which is the best chracteristic of the Japanese. Also, the practice of being kind to our neighbors and travellers and things of that

nature. This is how our traditions began.

Q: Do you believe that osahō (etiquette) is very important?

A: Yes, I do indeed. Most certainly, superiors are superiors, inferiors are inferiors. We say that everyone is equal, but I believe tha there must be "kijime" even among the children. But, in present Japan, the Japanese have turned things upside down and have confused everything. For me, I believe women should be like women and men like men. I still believe men should be held high in esteem, even for a little bit. But, only clever woman can do this because if they are together, the woman may become stronger. I believe that maintaining kijime is very important. I too, my eldest son to Urasenke and the first thing he noticed was . . . he told me this after returning home, but he said, "Mama, why did the present wife stand behind and a little lower thatn the first wife? And also, why did the wife of the 2nd eldst son stand lower than the first wife?" That's how they come to give their greetings. My son said, "wouldn't it be best if they all stood in one line?" I told my son, "their household is not like that. The first wife always stand ahead and the rest of the wives stand behind her. This is the ture Japanese way. This is what is good about Japan."

Q: Do you have relatives in Urasenke?

A: The present mothdr of the Soho, was my schoolmate, she was two years older thatn me. We were in school plays together. So whenever we go to Kyoto we call on her. We visit her, have dinner, receive presents and then go home.

Q: Do you know how to do the tea ceramony?

A: Yes, just a little.

Q: What about flower arraning?

A" Yes, a little of that otoo.

Q: Anything else?

A: I paly a little music; put on plays; and sing some shigin.)

Q: Were ;your friends in Urasenke your schoolmates?

A; Yes. There are many distinguished individuals living there. When my next to the eldest son was living in Kyoto, I told him that the Japanese living in America are not necessarily the best Japanese, so he should be exposed to all the good things in Japan while living there. This is what I told him to do.

Q: It must have been very difficult for you to raise your children in America, a country which is barbaric in some ways for you - you, who was educated and brought up in a truly traditional Japanese style.

A: Well, actually it wasn't that difficult. The children were a little different in those days. Unlike the present day, they listened and obeyed their parents.

Q: So you were able to teach them properly?

A: Yes. It seems to me that parents in this country are often unable to discipline their children at home. However, living in the countryside, we couldn't afford that luxury. It is very important to teach Japanese to our children, but it is just as important to fill in those areas that they were missing. This was long time ago, but we were just talking ab ut his recently. Ten-chan, he's 45 or 46 now, but I taught him Sunday school when he was 6 years old. I told him that he should always pass an elder in church by bowing slightly to show respect. Then next Sunday, he came up to me and said, "I bowed just like you told me last week, but all the big people didn't" He still remembered what I had told him even to this day. Oh, we laughed at this. He's 45 years old now. We had a reunion recently. Oh, we had a good laugh over this. I found

most all the Florin children to be very good children.

Q: Were there some people who were really having extreme financial difficulties because of the Depression?

A: No, not among our church members, but people did go through some hard times. I really don't know the actual details, but there were some hard times. The workers had to get an advance from the owners until the next crop season so they could live through the sinter. They would return the money when they worked during the next crop season. The off-season was the worst. They didn't have any money during this time. Some said that they couldn't even afford to given even 1 penny for offering during this time. I believe we all had basic financial difficulties. When Mary started to go to college, her high school teacher made some of her dresses. In Flrin, Japanese and white students went to separate schools. Japanese went to their own school and the whites went to their schools. Education was taught separately by race. About 2 years before the war, Mary and the Shimin church were able to desegregate the schools. All the children were able to go to school together. So when Mary came to visit us from Fresno, she couldn't understand why we still had segregated schools. She told us that the Japanese students were going to school with white students in Fresno. Mar y wondered why the Japanese students went to school together only. Discrimination was pretty severe in Florin in those days. We had segregated schools. The children said that they flet so insecure and insignificant going to high school with the whites because they were used to going to school with only Japanese students. They said they felt totally insignificant in high school. Discrimination was quite severe then. Japanese are very hard workers, wherever they go. Florin strawberries were delicious. They were fragile

and would go bad as soon as they were over-ripe. The strawberries now days last, and last and at least for a week, right? But, not ours. The young people would deligently help their parents pack strawberries as soon as they got home from school. The young children were hard workers. They had their share of hardships too.

Q: Did you ever go to pick strawberries, too?

A: Yes, once. Tsuji-san came and asked me to go help them pick some crops. They said, "Sensi, please come and help us. An hour or two hours would be fine. The strawberries are over-ripe and we don't have enough hands." I'd never done anything like that, but I went and helped them for a day. On the way back home in the evening, my feet ached so much. I counld't hardly raise my legs. Anyway, I continued pciking the crops for a couple of weeks.

Q: Did you work all day long?

A: Yes, I didn. I wondered what my parents in Japan would think if they saw me in this condition. I"m sure they'd go into shock. These were some of my thoughts as I tried to give a helping hand. I do believe I was of some help. Yes, I've worked out in the fields picking strawberries.

Q: Aside from this you were teaching Japanese?

A: Yes.

Q: You were also teaching Sunday school classes?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you teach anything else? Flo er arrangements or something of that nature?

A: No, I didn't teach anything else.

Q: Your children were still young then, right?

A: Yes. That's why I really couldn't go out for long periods. When

Baba Sensei, an evangelist, was here for a visit, I really wanted to go out every night, but I just couldn't. I did have high school students come and babysit. This is the only way I could leave the house in the evenings. You've heard that minister's kids turn out to be thw worst chil ren, right? People say that minister's children don't have rokumaku. I knew that's what some people believed. I firmly believe that one must have an orderly disciplined family or else the children will act undisciplined outside the home. In this way we must keep our home orderly so others couldn't point us out. I've known cases where both parents could go to meetings every night and leave their children home alone and these children would go bad. There are cases like this. I would think about cases like this and so I tried to stay home as much as possible when they were young. Of course, I did go to the evening meetings if it was an important event. We had so many family meetings while Baba Sensi was visiting us. I couldn't even go into my home home because of the people there. We had to convert our barn into a meeting room by setting up boxes and putting boards on top of th;em. The people would sit on these make-shift benches. The Issei and the Nisei met together and had our family meetings. We had 40 to 50 persons in these meetings.

Q: What year was this?

A: Let's see, when did Baba Sensei come to visit us? I think it was around 1935 or 1936. I think it was around then. We all became very close and our faith became stronger. Our membership increased. We became number one in the northern coast.

Q: Were there a lot of Japanese in Florin?

A: Yes, there were several thousands. There were not only Japanese , but also Mexicans during the strawberry season. Yes, there were

several thousands.

Q: Was Mr. Senno from Florin?

A: Yes.

Q: Was he one of the Church members then?

A: Yes, he was. Senno-san, Sakakibara-san were both members of the church at that time. Senno-san's next to the eldest daughter married a Salvation Army member and now lives in San Francisco. Their whole family wee dedicated Christians.

Q: Were they going through hardships at thattime?

A: Yes, they were. He was the man who said they didn't even have one penny as an offereing. This is what he said when they came to attend Sunday school In those days, Sunday school offering was one penny.

Q: People at Florin must have been poor?

A: Yes, that's right. We all were. The Church really could not do much, either. We didn't demand to get this or that from our congregation.

Q; Did you only have two bedrooms even when your children were older?

A: Yes, that's why the two of us slept out in the parlor.

Q: Was the parlor enclosed?

A: Yes. Look over there even now, Sensi, this is all the room we had. We left it intact. I experienced poverty for the first time in my life in America. But actually, it wasn't an extreme hardship. I really didn't think we were in poverty as we lived through the experience.

Q: Did your husband receive his salary from the Church during the Depression era?

A: In the beginning, he received partial pay from the Board and partially from the Church. Then later, the Church became independent from

the Board. So, hw was then paid only from the Church. We lived on $20 donation from the Church during that period. This was before the war, during the depression. But, we somehow made it through that period.

Q: Have you ever had to go without food?

A: No, not really. It's very strange under circumstances.

Q: So you did have food to eat?

A: Yes, we did.

Q: But you were unable to do other things?

A: No, we couldn't.

Q: Not even to go to a movie once in a while?

A: Actually, the Japanese class had some funds from the church and we showed Japanese movies. There were about 13 places which showed Japanese movies to the interest peopple in the surrounding areas. Therefore, we never had to go out to see a moview. The Japanese language class showed the movies during the summer. This is how we had fun. We were just talking about this with Mr. Senno the other day. Mr. Senno would quit work early and people wondered why . He'd take a good hot bath, eat dinner, and go to the movie hall really early. We had a make-shift theatre by putting wooden planks on crate boxes. He would come really early, holding an unbrella while the sun was still very hot. This is how everyone had fun. We were just reminescing about this the other day. I remember watching all those pe ple with their unbrellas, waiting in line to go see the films. They all came so early. Really. The fims couldn't be shown until the evening when it go dark, but these people would wait for a long time. They were that anxious to see Japanese movies.

My 2nd son, who doen't always obey me, loved chnbara movies. He'd

imitate the characters in the movies after he saw it. Everyone really enjoyed waiting for and watching these Japanese movies. There were Japanese schools here and there, some sponsored by the Buddhist Church and others were out in the countryside. $1 paid for a family of 13 occupying 2 rows of benches. I was just talking to a person about the number of movie goers and (s)he said that 50 people was a good showing. But do you know that we had 700 to 800 people who went to the Japanese movies in the olden days? The number of people in general has decreased since the war, but the Buddhist Church was able to build a good size auditorium. Florin became part of Sacramento.

Q: I heard that there were still gambling houses out in Florin in those days.

A: Yes, I believe there were.

Q: I guess many of the bachelors went there.

A: Yes, probably.

Q: Did you ever hear that these men got swindled out of their money?

A: No, I really don't know of such things. I just know that there were gambling houses.

Q: What kind of people went there?

A: I really don't know.

Q: Were they workers?

A: Perhaps.

Q: Do you have any other memories of Florin?

A: Well, after the war started and we were confined to the 5-mile radius . . .

Q: Do you mean before the war started?

A: Before the war?

Q: Yes, during the time you came to Florin and right before the War.

A: Well, just as we talked about this before, it would then be the time when Reverend Baba came to visit our Church and the members' faith really became deeper.

Q: What are some of the things that you remember about the social problems of the Japanese at the time or of problems between the Japanese.

A: I don't remember any problems between the Japanese.

Q: Weren't there a lot of camps in the Florin area?

A: Yes, there were, but there were special entrances for them. I really didn't hear of them.

Q: Well, actually a couple of people told me that there was a murder in that area. I don't know when this occurred, probably around the 1910's or '20's.

A: Yes, I heard the same thing, but I believe it occurred before we came to Florin.

Q: Was it fairly peaceful when you came here?

A: Yes, very. Nothing of that nature ever happened.

Q: How did the Buddhists and the Christians get along?

A: Nothing really unusual. Sometimes the Buddhist monks would come visit us.

Q: So the relationship was quite friendly and cordial?

A: Yes. So, when a Buddhist died who lived in Florin, we would all pitch in a buy some flowers and sent them to him.

Q: How did you feel when Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese navy?

A: I was shocked. It was on a Sunday. It was a Sunday morning right after the worship. Mr. Tsukamoto came rushing to the Church yelling, "the war has started. Japan started a war!" We were all shocked.

Q: Did you feel that this was evevitable? Did you expect this or was it totally unexpected?

A: We really didn't feel like such a thing would happen. However, the FBI agents did come to investigate those individuals on their list. The Buddhist minister used to come to our home and ask, "did they come?" "No, they didn't," we'd answer him. The FBI agents would become suspicious if people had pictures of anyone with Japanese military uniforms on. Thoe people with certificates of military arts were dragged off. No, we really didn't think a war would start. We were shocked when it did happen.

Q: What did you think would happen to the Japanese?

A: We were unsettled about where we'd live.

Q: Did you think that the Japanese (here in America) would get persecuted after the attack of Pearl Harbor?

A: I didn't think about that. There were rumors that all the Japanese would be line up in a row and be shot to death by machine guns. There were rumors like that. Some people worried about things like that. There were rumors like that flying around.

Q: Then what happened? Weren't you imposed the 5-mile restricted area?

A: Yes, that's right so we had to get a permit to go to Sacramento to shop or to go to the dentist since it was 8 miles to Sacramento. Yes, we were in some hard times then.

Q: Then what would happen if you went to Sacramento without the permit?

A: Oh, then you'd be carried off by the government. Noone was ever in that kind of a perdecament. Everyone obeyed all the orders and asked for the necessary permits.

Q: What happened then? How old was your youngest child?

A: I believe about 6 years old. 1931 . . . so, she was 9 years old.

Q: Your oldest?

A: He was going to junior college then . . . he had just graduated from high school . . so he was . . . ninteen or twenty. We could only takes things that we could carry. We coundn't take anything else to camp. We had to sell what we could; store what we could.

Q: Who did you ask for help?

A: A close white friend or someone. People like that. Most people sold their belongings.

Q: Did you have to sell your things cheaply?

A: Yes, people would come to our homes and say, "didn't you have a dinner set?" They came to see if they could buy some things cheaply.

Q: Did you sell your things?

A: Yes, I sold it all. I only had 2 bags. We had some extra luggage so we asked a white family accross the street to store our boxes for us. Then we left for camp.

Q: Had you bought your own desk?

A: Yes, we had to get rid of such good things. Yes, the sons of one of our members had made it for us. We had to sell that and everything. We could only take what we could carry. We literally became naked.

Q: Where did you go first?

A: To Tule Lake.

Q: Did you go straight to Tule Lake?

A: We stopped at Marysville for awhile and then went to Tule Lake.

Q: How did you feel when you arrived in Marysville?

A: They had built the depot in such a hurry that you could see the grass between the wooden floors. We were housed in such a place like that and really saddened us.

Q: How long did you stay in Marysville?

A: A few months, I don't really remember.

Q: About two or three months?

A: Yes, about that long. Then we went to Tule Lake.

Q: What kind of hardships did you encounter in Marysville? Did you have any problems there?

A: No, not at all.

Q: How was the food?

A: We wondered what we'd be served every day. Some one would say, "I wonder if they'll feed us pig's tail, or feet or something? Maybe it'll be pig's brains or stomach." I don't know if this was true, but someone would start rumors like that. The American government took sufficient care of us. I believe that in some camps the government gave us $4.75 per adults and $2.75 per child for clothing. So, families with many children made some profit on it.

Q: Was this a monthly clothing allowance?

A: Yes. But, we weren't given clothing allowance in our camp. I don't know why.

Q: Did you have any problems doing the laundry?

A: There was a laundry area. We went there to do our laundry.

Q: What kind of people came to Marysville?

A: People from Loomis, Florin and places like that.

Q: Anywhere else?

A: I really don't remember who else came to Marysville. In Tule Lake, there were people from Tacoma and places like that.

Q: Did you go to Tule Lake from Marysville by train?

A: Yes, I believe so. It's been so long ago that I've forgotten exactly.

I believe we went there by train. We had to keep all the train window blinds rolled down so people couldn't see that the train was full of Japanese. There were some people who might cause some problems for us. This is how we had to come to live in the camp.

Q: What were some of the feelings when you arrived in Tule Lake?

A: Well...we were first put in a room which we shared with another family. There was nothing in there except a large stove. The room was completely bare. I wondered, "Well, now what is going to happen to us?" I was disturbed about not knowing what would happen to us next. If we worked in camp, we were paid $16.00 and physicians were paid $19.00. Ministers weren't paid by the camp officials, but paid $40.00 by the Board. So, our salary was quite good compared to the others. We listened to the shortwave radio and knew that Japan wasn't doing well. But, people in the camp insisted Japan would win. We listened to the shortwave radio and heard that Japan just wasn't doing well at all. Dr. Smith, the president of our Church told us not to worry, that we'd be able to go back to our homes by 1946. He told us not to sell our land. He told us this often. Therefore, we put our faith in what he said--that we'd be able to leave the camp eventually.

Q: Weren't most people in Tule Lake pretty healthy.

A: Yes, in the beginning. There were some Japanese who acted terribly. Some persons would call the rest of the Japanese dogs and put garbage cans in front of the buildings and said, "Since you're all dogs, eat out of the garbage cans." This occurred in the beginning. Later the camp was used to house those Japanese who were returning to Japan.

Q: Were you called "dogs" because Rev. Sasaki was a Christian minister?

A: No, we were never called that. Others were called that. We got along with other people.

Q: Why were others called that?

A: Well, it was mostly the leaders who were treated like that. Mr. Hitomi was treated like that. Some people left a garbage can in front of their door. "Since you're a dog, eat this," they told him. When was that ...oh yes, we were holding a meeting in the mess hall which held about 125 people or so. We lived in Block 19 in Tule Lake. Well, a question arose in one of the meetings. The question was regarding the signing of the loyalty oath. Each block discussed this issue with every member. I really hated that issue. I really did. However, I thought about it and since we were all living in America and if we are to live under American law, we had to confront such an oath. It was mutual. Therefore, all of us in our Block agreed to sign the loyalty oath. There were people who (voted) were doing things in the dark, so others wouldn't see what they were doing. I really didn't like that at all. The loyalty oath issue was one of our bigger issues--whether we would be loyal to America or not. As long as we live in America, we must abide by American laws. This is common sense. Therefore, we approved the signing of the loyalty oath. All of us in our Block agreed to sign the loyalty oath. As a result, there were many discussions, but we arrived at a decision at the end. I don't know about other blocks in the camp, but we arrived at a decision.

Q: How did you feel about the Nisei going into the military?

A: I felt that American citizens shouldn't be forced into camps-they had American citizenship. However, Americans wanted to prevent any harm against the Japanese. That's why the Japanese were put into camps. For those of us who live in America, we should help this country when she's in dire circumstance. I believe this is common sense.

Q: Did your son join the Army?

A: No, the eldest son was sent to Germany after the war. The second oldest son went to the Korean War. He was stationed at Baitsu. So, they were not in the War. The eldest son was sent to a university in Germany. They sent him to school to make him an officer. They told him that they could become an officer in three months. However, he didn't like the military, so he turned them down.

Q: So you were in the "Yes" faction of the loyalty oath issue, right? Were you scorned by the "No" faction?

A: No, not at all, We weren't criticized.

Q: Your whole Block was the same, right?

A: Yes.

Q: It was said by many people that there were many "kanrikan" (?) at Tule Lake. Do you have any other memories of Tule Lake?

A: We had schools and a hospital in camp. We even had a post office. We had many facilities available for us. Well...the number of people using the hospital facilities really increased because it was free. People while living on the outside had to pay for their doctor visitations, but while in camp, the hospital use was all free. Just too many people were going to the hospital. So, they had to do something to control this. Therefore, we became nurse's assistants. We had to pass an exam and be licensed, too. One nurse's assistant was assigned to one block. Up until then, a doctor had to examine every patient who came to the hospital. Whenever a member of our block was ill, I'd be called in and I'd take their pulse and blood pressure. Then, I'd have to decide if it would be best to have the doctor come or not, or whether the patient would have to be sent to the hospital or not. The nurse's assistants

would have to decide and then notify the hospital. In this way, the excessive load was lightened for those doctors at the hospital. This is some of the things we did in Tule Lake.

Q: Did you encounter any difficult cases?

A: No, not any really serious illnesses. No one was sent to the hospital, either.

Q: Were you called to look at patients, though?

A: Oh, yes, we were called in. Some assistants would report increased pulse rate or higher blood pressure just so the doctor would come to look at the patients. The doctor would come and he'd say, "What is this? This patient doesn't even have a temperature." He would scold the assistants for this behavior. There were people like that.

Q: How was the food in Tule Lake?

A: Well, we didn't have any particular problems. We ate what was given to us. No particular problems. Eventually, we had a fish market in camp. Dry goods store opened up, too. Some Americans who had been in Japan, like the missionaries would ask for fish and tempura and things like that. (Side 5) So, I would go to the fish market.

The stove in Tule Lake was so large, a person could fit in it. Tule Lake was such a cold place, you know. We really used it to the maximum and we cooked some delicious dishes. We made tempura. We took a few small pots, but we used the top of the stove mostly. When we had white Sensei (ministers) visiting us, we cooked for them.

We lived in Tent 9, right in the middle. We were situated in an ideal location and when ministers came to visit the camp, they would

stop at our tent and take a break. We had many visitors in our tent. The most we had in one day was 33 persons. I remember serving our visitors all day long.

Q: What kind of guests did you have?

A: Well, all sorts of people. Ministers visiting the camp, church members and other camp members. Our tent was right in the middle of the camp so it was a great place to rest after going to the clinic, or the post office and such places. Our camp was very large, you know and it was a long walk from one side of the camp to the other. We even had members of other churches stop at our tent. Yes, it was very interesting. The most people we had visit us in one day was 33 persons. Some of the talks with the visitors were very interesting.

Q: Wasn't Tule Lake a cold place?

A: Yes, it was very cold there.

Q: Did you have some problems because of it?

A: No, not too much. We had wind storms quite often. We would go watch a baseball game and then all of a sudden wind storm would come up. We would all go home in a big rush. We finally rushed in for shelter. That was fine, but after we looked around a bit, we saw a man in the room. Would you believe it we had fled into the men's bathroom. We were so embarrassed. The wind storm had lifted all the dirt and sand and we were covered with it. We had thought we fled into the women's bathroom and we couldn't understand why a man was in there. We then found out we were in the men's room. We really had a good laugh about that.

The camp was located right at the lake surrounded by sand. We had small clams right in our front door. I made clam soup with it. We also made

baskets from the grass growing at Tule.

Q: What did you make the baskets out of?

A: Out of "i", the material tatami are made of. We made baskets from it and were able to sell them too. The women's club did things like that.

Q: Tule Lake being so cold, didn't you have icicles?

A: Yes, we did. But, we were from Tohoku so we didn't have any problems adjusting. Icicles did bother us at all.

Q: What was your hobby?

A: I learned to sew in those days. I had a little girl so I wanted to learn how to sew dresses. Mrs. Matsunami had a little sewing class in camp. English, flower arranging, calligraphy classes and vocational classes for men were all available.

Q: Did you go to those classes?

A: No, I didn't. I went to sewing classes. We had to walk wherever we went. We had to walk to Blg. 42 located on the other side of the camp to visit the members from the Tacoma church. On Tuesday nights, we went to Blg. 42 for choir practice. The day before we were to go to Blg. 42, we would get a downpour, but the skies would be clear on the day I was to go teach choir. Really. This happened all the time. I taught the Tacoma congregation songs and music and Sasaki and I would walk to our barrack around midnight. On the way back we would listen to the (kayoten) chirping and made us very homesick and lonely. But, really, on the day of our choir teaching, we would have beautiful weather.

Q: So you taught choir while in camp?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you also teach choir in your Florin church?

A: No, Mary taught choir in the Florin church. All I did was make kuromame and made them eat it, telling them it was good for their vocal chords.

Some of the Americans would come to the church and say hello. That was very nice and thought it was very American, too.

Q: Where was this?

A: In Tule Lake.

Q: What do you mean they would come and say hello?

A: After they ate, they would go to the cook and say it was well cooked or something like that. That was very nice. They honored us by seeing someone even like me.

Q: Who were these people. Were they the people working in the camp?

A: Yes, both those who worked in the camp and those white visitors. They were very kind to call on us to say hello. We would never see anything like that in Japan.

Q: How were the children in Tule Lake?

A: The children went to school. We had a white school in camp and our children went there. My eldest daughter helped out in kindergarten classes while in camp. After camp, she went to Chicago and worked on her own.

Q: Do you have anyother memories of Tule Lake camp life?

A: Let's see...well, I was the vice president of PTA in camp. The president was Mr. Inouye Aisaku. Everytime we would call a PTA meeting, he would disappear for that day. So, I ended up doing all the work. But, I got smarter, though. I would just leave things alone and say "This is for the president to make a decision on. We shall just have to wait until he gets back." I would end the meeting on that note. I was very busy.

If one of the ministers left, then my husband had to give a sermon at that church. Then one day, when he was giving a sermon, he was fidgeting with his glasses and his book. I didn't understand what he was doing. I asked him what was the matter, showing such bad manners at the pulpit.

He said all the words on the page looked double. We immediately went to see Dr. Kambara, who has a clinic in Los Angeles, and the doctor said it was not his vision, but rather my husband had high blood pressure. He rested for about a month.

Q: Was this in camp?

A: Yes. He was so busy and his busy schedule got to him.

Q: Was he busy because he was going to various place to give sermons?

A: Yes, that's right. He conducted prayer sessions, family counseling sessions and things like that, too. He was very busy. All this finally got to him and he developed high blood pressure. I really can't remember anyother events in Tule Lake. I stayed home all day long to take care of him.

Q: I've heard of cases where the families were split and children had to eat with other children and adults with other adults. Did that happen to you?

A: No, we ate as a family. Such thing did not happen to us. Oh, I see, things like that happened to other people. I see.

Q: How long were you in Tule Lake?

A: About two years. After we left the camp, we went to Jerome.

Q: How was Jerome?

A: One of our church members who was the block manager in camp came and asked me if I wanted to work. I asked him what kind of work and he said that I'd be setting tables in a mess hall. I figured I could do something like that so the wife of Takeda Giichi and I went to work.

Q: Was it fun?

A: Well, all we did was set tables and came right home. It wasn't particularly any fun, but it was work and I believe work is good for people. It was very nice. I became close to a lot of people like

those working in the kitchen and people like that.

Q: What kind of memories do you have about Jerome?

A: Oh, it's been so long...I've forgotten. I really don't have any special memories. The only thing I remember is the time I slipped and fell down.

Q: Was it a hot place?

A: Well, it was hot and cold. People were amazed that we were going to a place like that. But, we decided to go there since one of our church members lived there. Of course, there were rattle snakes. When it rained, the rain drops were huge. There were large mosquitoes, as large as sparrows. That's the kind of place we went. People asked us why we were going to a place like that, but it was all right. We did our church work.

Q: Weren't there rattlesnakes there?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you ever see one?

A: Yes. The snakes get one rattle per year. Poisonous snakes. We were cautioned to be careful of black widow spiders. The block manager cautioned us often.

Q: Where did you go after Jerome was closed?

A: We went to Laura.

Q: How was Laura?

A: Members of the Seikakai lived next to us and people of all denominations worshipped together so we all became very close friends.

Q: How was your husband's high blood pressure at that time?

A: It was much better and did much better for a long time, but at the end my husband died of high blood pressure and diabetes.

Q: When did this happen?

A: In 1956.

Q: Did anything else happen in Laura that you remember?

A: None of us had work so we would go into the _____ with obento in the afternoon and cut trees. We gathered the best wood chips and those in charge of making the hot bath (ofuro) would gather these wood chips. We really didn't have anything to do, so those who had some hobby would come here and gather bits of wood. We weren't allowed to own hamuno (sickle), but if you go near a dump, you can find pieces of steel and we made knives out of that. Some people carved things out of wood and made some furniture. We made some beautiful things. There's a type of tree which has dark patterns and so people made chest of drawers and tables from that kind of tree. Some of the people were very talented. I was given a large vase, a vase one of my children threw away while I was gone to Japan, but it was a large, beautiful vase. The man made it out of a cactus. Each individual had their favorite pass time and they would pass their day doing what they liked to do. Some other people enjoyed working in the theatre doing plays, dancing, shigin and things of that sort. Classes were offered in those areas. A class would put on a performance and we would all gather under a tent in the evening and watch the performance. It could be a dance or a play. Someone would bring all the costumes, like wigs, clothes, etc. and the performers would use that and would dance the Sendai Hagi. When some of the Issei get together now, they say they'd like to go to camp once again so they can all be together. We could do what pleased us. We didn't have to worry about food at all. We had plenty of food. Some of the people would tell us to take some grapefruits or some eggs home. Other camp members sent us vegetables and fruit that they had grown.

Q: Of the three places, Tule Lake, Laura and Jerome, which one did you

like best?

A: Well, I liked Tule Lake the best. That was the first place I had gone in. I kept myself pretty busy there. There were many Japanese. There were close to 20,000 people in Tule Lake.

Q: Because all of you were all crowded together in a small area, were there any minor problems, like the children fighting and so forth?

A: No, not really. We were all aware of the crowded conditions and tried to live together taking up an area available for only half a person.

Q: Did the top echelon keep tsutsunuke?

A: No...not in Tule Lake. I believe Marysville was like that, but the rest of the area wasn't.

Q: When did you leave Laura?

A: I don't remember.

Q: Was it after the war?

A: No, before the end of the war. We left during the war.

Q: You then went to Seabrook, right?

A: Yes, that's correct.

Q: What were the circumstances surrounding your stay at Seabrook?

A: There were about 3,000 Japanese in Seabrook. One of the members of the Seikokai asked us to go with him. That's why we went there. Although all 3,000 people were not Christians, and there were members from various denominations, but they were in need of a minister. There were over 100 Episcopalians there. Mr. Eto, who wasn't an ordained minister unofficially conducted services. Therefore, we were invited to become their official minister. That's why we went to Seabrook.

Q: Is this gentleman still alive?

A: Yes, he is. He's about 97 years old or so. He is a very devoted

Christian. He was the first minister to offer services, so the people at Seabrook did have church services prior to our arrival there

Q: Is Mr. Eto still in Seabrook?

A: Yes, I believe he's still living there.

Q: How long did you stay in Seabrook?

A: I lived there for 10 years. Sasaki became very ill there. About a year before he passed away, he had an attack and he was hospitalized. He was in the hospital for about two weeks and recovered. He came home, but he was immobilized from the waist down. He felt that he couldn't be an effective minister in this condition, so he sent a letter to the head office and resigned. From that period until he passed away, he spent his time freely.

Q: What was Seabrook like?

A: Everyone was in dormitories when we arrived there. All the children under 18 were fed without charge. There were 3,000 of us, so you can imagine how busy the kitchen staff were. They cooked 3 or 4 ryo of rice.

Q: What were all of you doing there?

A: We worked for Toy-ichi refrigeration factory. Seabrook was named after the owner of the factory. There were some Germans there, too. These GErmans were prisoners of war who worked here. We listned to shortwave and...

Q: From Japan?

A: About the war. We knew that Japan could never win. We lost the war on August 15th and all of us looked depressed. So, the whites tried not to show their jubilance too much. We all worked like any other day on that day.

Q: How did you feel when Japan lost the war?

A: I have seen some negative sides of the Japanese military. Therefore, I felt relieved that Japan had lost the war. Of course, I didn't want Japan to lose, but the soldiers oppressed many people. The soldiers

were cocky and often mistreated the newly enlisted men. I've wondered what Japan would be like if Japan had won the war. Tadao Sensei returned to Japan on the last ship to Japan. He wanted to tell the Japanese, but he didn't arrive on time. It is sad that Japan lost the war, but on the other hand, I felt relieved.

Q: Did others share your feelings?

A: I don't know how others felt. These are only my personal opinions. There weren't any Brazilian who shouted, "We won, we won." When we heard on August 15th that we had lost the war, we all shed tears, but we also felt like "shikataganai." Dr. Smith had already told us that Japan could not win and that the war was at an end. We told our church members that those who wanted to return could go back to Japan by 1946.

Q: How did Rev. Sasaki feel?

A: I don't know. I never asked him. All of us were sad that Japan had lost the war. I believe we all shared this same feeling.

Q: What do you remember about Seabrook?

A: We did not have a chapel in Seabrook, so the members would gather chairs and put them in rows every time we met. Some of the members of the women's organization would decorate the room. In these ways, everyone tried to make the place look like a church. After the services, everyone put the chairs up and cleaned the room. We were able to celebrate Christmas, Easter and other holidays just as festive as before the war. There were many of us and so we had a lot of fun together.

Q: Did any unusual or unfortunate events occur?

A: No, not to my knowledge. The only unfortunate thing was when Sasaki fell ill.

Q: Did you ever want to return to California?

A: We had intended to go back to California, but my children began to go to school there.

Q: Your husband passed away in 1955?

A: No, he passed away in 1956. When he passed away, the youngest child was working in one of the schools in Seabrook. The eldest was in Columbia. The youngest son had just returned from University of Kyoto.

Q: What did your second son study?

A: He majored in the history of Far Eastern politics. My son's favorite teacher was Naba Toshisabu, a gentleman from China. He was the 14th generation teacher. I asked my son what characteristic did he like about his teacher. He said that his teacher was a very contented man. Sure enough when I went to his home, he lived very humbly. He wasn't an extravagant man. When my son was about to return home, he wrote two poems for him. The poem was about one's longing for one's own homeland. They were beautiful poems. I still have the poems.

Q: What kind of work does your second son do? Is he a college instructor?

A: Now? No, he isn't. He went to Kyoto University for a year as a graduate student after he graduated from Georgetown University. After he returned, he was asked to go to Washington, D.C. But, he didn't want anything to do with the bureaucracy. The government sent him letters and telegrams and telephone calls. He refused the job. He worked for Dentsu, one of the world's largest advertising company. He became the branch manager of the company. He worked there for some time, but he has his own company now.

Q: Advertising related company?

A: Yes. The eldest son graduated from Hamelin and received his Masters Degree from Columbia University. He is now a director of a social agency.

Q: Are the rest of your children girls?

A: Yes. The eldest daughter ran a kindergarten in Chicago for awhile. She lives here now. She married and has lived out here. The second daughter graduated from fashion designer school in New York. She works for a designer company. The third daughter graduated from Montclair University in New Jersey. She continued her education at Rutgers where she received in scholarship to pursue her master's degree. She is a mathematics teacher at a junior high school in Hollywood.

Q: What were some of the reasons for returning to California?

A: Our second daughter lived out here. That was one of the reasons. Also the third daughter began to live here. So, I decided to return here and live with them.

Q: Where did you first arrive?

A: Los Angeles.

Q: What year was this?

A: 1959. I took my husband's ashes to Japan in 1957. I returned in 1959. I returned to Japan in 1961 and came back in 1963. I was going back and forth for awhile. I went back to Japan this year, too.

Q: You came back to California in 1959, right? Did you take all of your husband's ashes to Japan?

A: He always told me he wanted to go home. My younger brother had come to attend a university in Pennsylvania to study from Kyoto University. We had planned to return to Japan together. But my brother decided to return by the way of Europe. My husband passed away during this time.

Q: In retrospect, how do you feel about having come to live in America? Do you ever wonder about what your life would have been if you had remained in Japan?

A: Yes, I do. I'm a type of person who can't _____. I feel very obligated to America.

Q: Do you consider yourself to be a true-hearted Japanese?

A: I don't know. I have received many things from my experiences in America and I'm very grateful. However, I am Japanese at the core and can't be totally Americanized. I am just as you see me.

Q: Do you plan to return to Japan?

A: No.

Q: So, you'll...

A: Yes, I do have a home in Japan, but I'm planning to remain in America. I've thought about living out my life in Japan, but after taking many things into consideration, I feel it's best to live near my children.

Q: Are you glad that you came to America?

A: Yes, I do, especially for my children.

Q: As an Issei, what would you like to say to the younger generation?

A: Wherever you are, Japanese will always be Japanese. Japan has positive characteristics which other countries don't have. Japan has her own unique culture. I would like to see the Japanese culture remain and continue on with the future generations. Mary feels like I do. She's working towards that goal now. I've always felt like this.

Q: Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share with us?

A: I'd like to see the positive aspects of the Japanese to continue on with the future generation.

Q: Yes, the younger generation are interested in their heritage... We don't know how far in the future this will be, but we are planning to translate these interviews and compile a book of the Issei Experiences.

We aren't sure if we will publish all or some sections of the interview. When we begin to compile this book, we need your permission to quote your interview. May we have your permission to edit appropriate portions? If you agree, please sign here. This is for legal technicality.